

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing, February 17, 2012

H.B. 5014, An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures and Revenues for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2013.

Submitted by: Kathleen Hagearty, L.C.S.W. Nurturing Families Network

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee, My name is Kathleen Hagearty; I am a clinical supervisor of the Nurturing Families Network for the City of New Haven and a resident of New Haven. I would like to extend my sincere thanks for all your work on difficult budget issues this past year. We feel quite positive that the Governor's proposed budget maintains funding for the Nurturing Families Network program.

Our site began serving clients in December 2007 and our oldest children are now in preschool. In the past year, we have continued our work of home visitation, parenting groups, and services to fathers. We have also made sure to be a resource for our local community and ensure connections with our early childhood and youth communities.

We are excited to see the current focus on education and early childhood. Just this past month, researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles, published a yearlong research project conducted in Texas that indicated achievement gaps are evident in children as young as 3. We would like to underscore that the Nurturing Families Network program model supports and builds parents' skills from the prenatal period. Working with the child and family in the early stages of life, we concentrate on attachment, brain development, and supporting parent's concerns. This work is at the core of building social and emotional skills, understanding children's needs and our responses, and being prepared to succeed in school. We appreciate the opportunity to build on our work in the community. Again, thank you for your attention and commitment to CT's parents. Please do not hesitate to call on us.